

Community Engagement Director

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Please list the members currently serving on your ministry or leadership team.

- ❖ While I am officially the sole member of this ministry area, the work of engaging the community beyond our walls is the ministry of everyone in our congregation.

Please list what the goals of your group or ministry were for 2018.

- ❖ Continue to send our Christian message of love, acceptance and reconciliation into the community around us, inviting others to join us in our ministry.

Were you able to achieve your goals for 2018? Please be as specific as possible of your successes and failures.

- ❖ We had a few successes:
 - The church continues to be blessed by regular visitors to our worship, some of whom return for subsequent visits and eventually become active in our congregation.
 - The PR challenge of 2017 – Old First’s Stormy Affair – was transformed in to a PR success in 2018 when we shifted our live nativity into a refugee nativity, garnering positive attention from around the country (and internationally). We successfully shifted the focus of our public Advent ministry to a social issue that is more in line with our congregation’s mission to the hungry, homeless, and disadvantaged.
 - Our Facebook presence (our primary social media platform) continues to grow. We now have over 900 followers and some of our posts have reached as many as 3,000 people. This is an impressive feat for a congregation of fewer than 200 active members.

Where is your group or ministry area stuck? What is your group or ministry area pondering?

- ❖ We continue to struggle with helping others in the congregation embrace the value of engaging the outside community, in order to make everyone see that creating a welcoming community is the ministry of everyone. For example, the work of the hospitality teams should primarily be focused on ensuring that visitors have a positive experience on Sunday morning. This is the work of the entire congregation.

What do you hope to accomplish in the coming 2018 year?

- ❖ Our goal should be to increase the number of visitors overall, and—more importantly— increase the number of visitors who take the important step of becoming active in the congregation. #LoveFirst

What are the ways that the church can support your team?

- ❖ The congregation can support this effort by embracing the vision that a church thrives best when it is more focused outwardly than inwardly.